

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Status Of The Claims

This is an Amendment and Reply to the Office Action mailed September 14, 2007 in which the following rejections were set forth: Claims 1-2, 4-6, and 15-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by WO 01/63157 (“*WO ‘157*”); and Claims 3, 7-14, and 18-19 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, and were indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the indication of allowable subject matter.

By this response, Claim 1 has been amended, Claim 3 has been canceled, and no claims have been added. As such, Claims 1, 2, and 4-19 are pending in this application.

§ 102(a) Claim Rejections

WO ‘157

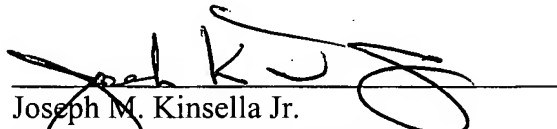
Independent Claim 1 has been amended in accordance with the Examiner’s indication of allowability. As such, independent Claim 1 now requires a spacer ring, which is neither disclosed nor suggested by the relied upon prior art. Because *WO ‘157* fails to disclose each and every element of Applicant’s amended Claim 1, Applicant respectfully submits that amended Claim 1—as well as any claim ultimately depending thereon—is in condition for allowance and requests that the rejection of the claims be removed and all claims be allowed to issue.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests that all rejections be removed and all pending claims be passed to issue. If any fees are required with this communication, Applicant authorizes the Commissioner to deduct such fees from Deposit Account No. 50-0545.

Respectfully submitted,

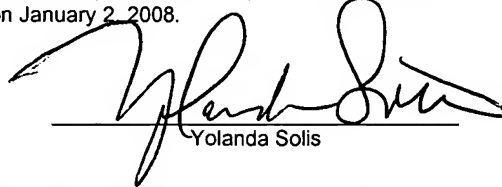
Dated: January 2, 2008



Joseph M. Kinsella Jr.
One of Attorneys for Applicant

CERTIFICATE OF FIRST CLASS MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on January 2, 2008.



Yolanda Solis